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the University of Chicago with a major in philosophy and mathematics, he attended the Julliard School of Music. He paused, decided his education was incomplete, and headed for Paris armed with a fellowship and the chance to work under the stern tutelage of Nadia Boulanger, a famed instructor living in France.

That, and an exposure to Eastern music through an association with Indian musician Ravi Shankar, changed him completely. Glass returned to America with practical musical knowledge and the beginnings of his own musical voice.

It is a credit to that musical voice that critics are so divided on which of his pieces is the best. *Newsweek's* Alan Rich hails *Einstein on the Beach* as one of "the truly pivotal artworks of our time."

But Michael Walsh of *Time* sees *Akhnaten*, "a musically luminous treatment of the rise and fall of the ancient Egyptian pharaoh some consider history's first monotheist," as Glass' "most accomplished work to date."

And Annalyn Swan of *The New Republic* sees his score for *Koyaanisqatsi* as proof of his continuing evolution, employing a new richness that makes it "classical Glass."

Certainly, for the novice, the place to begin is *Glassworks*, a modest collection of six pieces recorded by his ensemble in 1982 that is of uncommon beauty.

"The idea of that was to write a piece that would be an introduction to the general public . . . and I think it was very successful from that point of view," he explained. Indeed, it took on a life of its own, being incorporated in dance pieces and other art projects.

Glassworks marked an attempt by the artist to reach out to a broad audience, an audience he saw as ignored, and even scorned, by serialist composers who wrote with an ear only for rigorous complexity.

He felt the need to reach out keenly, for his major works — the operas — are by their very nature limited to so few.

"They show the television things, but that isn't so satisfying, is it?" he mused. "You can't take a medium of such grand stature and squeeze it into a box."

To compensate, he also has composed smaller music theater pieces that can travel well, such as the recently completed *A Thousand Airplanes*, which only requires his ensemble, an actor and a slide projector. But, he notes plaintively, "These still aren't operas."

Another project designed to reach a broad audience was *Songs From Liquid Days*, a song cycle with lyrics by artists at the forefront of rock.

"It was a lot of fun to work on that one. It took a long time. All those people were involved in different things. Paul (Simon) was doing *Graceland*, David Byrne was doing *True Stories* and Suzanne (Vega) was writing her first record."

As for his thoughts on the resulting album, which is generally considered to be an unsuccessful combination of his music and their various writing styles, Glass said, "I think it was surprising. Some people were sorry it wasn't more of a pop piece, some other people were sorry it wasn't more of a classical piece. But people are always saying that about me anyway."

They will be speaking about him again in July when his latest work premieres. *The*

Members of the Philip Glass Ensemble, which is playing at Gainesville High School this Sunday.

Making of the Representative for Planet 8 is based on the science fiction novel by Doris Lessing.

Its premiere has been delayed numerous times, owing to the difficult process that is involved in the completion of an opera. That process is ably described in *Music By Philip Glass*, his self-penned book which he notes was "a lot of work."

"Writing music is a lot more nourishing for me. I took some money, and I got some stock, you know?" he amiably confides. Then Glass adds happily, "It was fun to see it in print."

That book focuses on his three major operas, a trilogy of portraits focusing on science, religion and politics. Often, the action onstage is observed by a figure who had a great influence on the central character. For example, Russian author Leo Tolstoy looms over a good third of *Satyagraha*, Glass' meditation on Gandhi.

When the question is raised as to what figures would observe the action in an opera about Philip Glass, it is suggested that an obvious choice is Nadia Boulanger, the teacher who had such a profound influence on Glass early in his creative growth.

If it is possible to shudder over the phone, he did so, and then responded in a voice familiar to anyone who has suffered and grown under a teacher's severe discipline.

"Oh, God," Philip Glass groaned. "That's a frightening thought."